

Exercise by finnxwheeler

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Summary:

Will Byers absolutely hates exercising, but he loves watching Mike Wheeler do it.

Exercise

Will Byers began to immediately regret coming along with Mike Wheeler, because it was proving to be one hell of a distraction.

Will had agreed to go back to the dorm room he shared with Mike instead of sticking around at the library they'd been studying in. The reason? Mike had started working out a little and he wanted Will to help him with sit-ups. For some reason that Will was still trying to piece together, Mike had started working out a bit more recently. It wasn't excessive or anything too hardcore, just a few push-ups and sit-ups every now and then. From what Will could gather, Mike was doing it to stay in shape and because he'd gone on what Will liked to call "the annual health kick." Every year, for a month or two, Mike would commit to living a healthier lifestyle. However, Mike would give it up at the drop of a hat fairly quickly—or the words "extra cheese pizza," rather.

Mike and Will had both hated physical activity as children and teens, and it hadn't changed for Will in adulthood. Sure, they loved playing kickball in elementary school and were avid bike riders since childhood (not to mention Mike had been on the high school swim team), but anything beyond running five laps or walking a certain distance was too much for Will. Mike, however, seemed to push his hatred for all other exercise aside during his yearly bouts of healthy habits, and it drove Will absolutely insane. He was proud of Mike for wanting to make positive changes, but he also hated how distracted he would get while watching Mike work out. He loved watching, though, and the annual Mike Wheeler Push-Up and Sit-Up Marathon became something that Will hated to love.

And here Will was as if to prove his own point, the intention to read some class material as Mike did push-ups, and becoming a flustered mess instead.

Mike wasn't overly muscular by any means. In fact, he barely had muscles at all, a clear indication that he wasn't usually too keen on working out. His arms were wiry with small muscles, ones he claimed to have acquired in his swimming days. But Mike was beautiful in Will's eyes, and he found that he could never refuse Mike for

anything. Mike could ask him to jump into the Grand Canyon, and Will would do it with honor and a smile on his face. That's what he got for being in love with his best friend: Pain, doubt, and unlimited options as to what he would do for him.

It also didn't help that the love was, as far as Will knew, unrequited. Why would Mike ever love him, anyway? It was completely unfathomable, in Will's mind. Will was just a small guy who loved reading comics and drawing and Star Wars. There were potential doctors, lawyers, and successful people all around them, so why would Mike want to waste his time? Will knew that he wouldn't, not when he could have someone so much better.

Mike immediately began to do sit-ups upon arriving to their room, and Will had to assist by holding Mike's feet down. Will had to tell himself not to stare too long, because what if Mike started getting suspicious? What if he asked Will what was wrong? Will was one of the worst liars in the world, so it was either tell Mike the truth or cover it with a lie and make Mike even more suspicious. Even still, Will just watched in awe as Mike sat up with ease, not straining or stopping midway for a break like Will used to do in middle & high school gym class. In fact, Mike barely broke a sweat after twenty sit-ups, while Will was always covered in sweat after ten or less.

When it was time for the push-ups, Will sat on Mike's bed and watched—no, stared—as he began. Mike was in a white tanktop and black shorts, neither of which were helping Will at the moment. He was a blushing mess, and he just wanted to control it better so that Mike wouldn't ask questions. “Why are you so red?” Mike would inevitably ask. “Oh, nothing,” would come Will's dishonest response. “Just flustered from watching you work out!” Yeah, that certainly wouldn't go over too well.

Will placed his Introduction to Psychology textbook aside, completely mesmerized as Mike pushed himself up and back down ten times. After that, he sat up on his knees, brushing his unruly dark hair out of his eyes before smiling up at Will. Will could feel his heart fluttering in his chest as he observed that beautiful grin, and one of his own splayed across his lips.

“Can you help me with something?” Mike asked. “I know you gotta

read, but this won't take too long."

"What is it?" Will questioned, tilting his head curiously.

Now it's Mike's turn to be blushing and a little nervous, wringing his hands before meeting Will's eyes. "I...I need to practice not letting my body hit the ground and I was...I was just wondering if you'd mind...lying underneath me? You don't have to! I just...You're so petite and it would be perfect and—"

Will held up a hand, giggling as his own cheeks heated crimson. "I'd love to," Will said, before sarcastically adding: "After all, not many people would likely volunteer to lie beneath such a handsome, athletic man such as yourself."

"Smart-ass," Mike said with a laugh, his blush growing darker at Will's compliment. "I'm not that athletic, though! This and swimming is all I do."

"Swimming is a sport," Will argued teasingly, climbing from the bed and stretching a bit. "I mean, it's done competitively, like ball games and track and stuff."

"Okay, Mr. Know-It-All," Mike said with a playful eyeroll, patting the space in front of him. "Are you gonna do this or not?"

"I am," Will said, sitting before lying flat on his back in front of Mike. "Are you gonna do this or not?"

"Shut up," Mike said jokingly, clearing his throat as he climbed on top of Will. Their eyes locked immediately, and both men turned a whole new shade of crimson. Will had to fight back a fit of giggles, and also had to resist the urge to grab Mike and just kiss him right there.

But he didn't have to fight it for too long.

Before Will could even process what was happening, Mike had stopped doing the push-ups. Their eyes met again and Mike began to come back down. Instead of pushing himself back up, Mike only pressed down further, their lips less than an inch apart. Will's stomach was in knots, his cheeks still flushed as he debated closing the space between them. However, Mike seemed to have the same

idea, and Will didn't have time to react as Mike's lips pressed sweetly to his.

It was everything that Will had ever imagined. The kiss was tender and chaste, and Mike's lips tasted of strawberries and coffee. Will was on cloud nine, and he nearly pinched himself to make sure that he wasn't dreaming. He'd imagined this moment for as long as he could remember, and it had been so much better than what his expectations had allowed. The air in his lungs seemed to lose all purpose, as if Mike had suddenly become his oxygen and his necessity for survival. In a way, Will supposed, he already was and had been for as long as Will had known him.

Mike pulled back, blushing and sitting up hastily. "Sorry," he mumbled. "I didn't, I..."

"You kissed me," Will managed, grinning as he propped himself on his elbows. "On the mouth!"

"I know," Mike said, a pained expression on his face. "I'm sorry. I don't know what came over me."

"Don't be sorry," Will replied, taking Mike's hand before kissing him on the cheek. "I liked it."

"You did?" Mike asked in surprise. "Really?"

"Yep," Will said. "I...I've been wanting it for a while, actually."

"Oh," Mike said, breathing in relief. "Me...Me, too."

They remained silent for a few more minutes, just taking in the moment and what had just occurred. Will was still in shock, trying to process what had happened and knowing that they'd likely talk about it more in-depth later in the day. After a moment, Will broke the silence.

"Do you wanna go out for a cheeseburger?"

Mike laughed, shaking his head before nodding. "You know, I've been craving a big, greasy bacon cheeseburger, an order of fries & ranch, and a big glass of Coke. Funny, huh?"

“Oh, very,” Will said sarcastically, helping Mike from the floor and grabbing his car keys from his own desk. “I’ll buy.”

Mike didn’t object. He held the door for Will as they left their room, thankful that his annual health binge had actually paid off, after all.